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THE INTERIM

A REPORT OF INTERIM ACTIVITY . . . MONTANA LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL . . . HELENA

DECEMBER 1979

MAIL NO. 7

**TAX TIME
COMING AGAIN**

The January 1st tax deadline is approaching. A letter was mailed to all legislators in December 1978 detailing salary paid during the legislative session and the IRS Form 1099 for miscellaneous benefits received during the year. Form 1099 will report salary paid for services as legislative officer, work on the Legislative Committee, Legislative Council, Finance Committee, LSC, and Research Counsel, as well as the interim study committee. It also lists other non-session salary paid during the current fiscal year.

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

CONFERENCE The Legislative Council met on December 8. The Council:

(1) Heard a presentation from Carl H. Kartz, Director of Operations, on budgetary support assistance available to Montana staff offices which involve travel or other expense.

**LIBRARY
STAFF REVIEW**

(2) Voted to request the Retrieval Corporation of America to reprice the new Montana Code Annotated book. The price was not to listing under "T" because of an unpriced error made by the corporation. (Council staff reported no change in 15 telephone calls to day concerning the pricing of T.)

**COUNCIL
ADMINISTRATION
POLICY STUDY**

(3) Voted to contract with G&G's Interstate Consulting Clearinghouse for a review of the Council's internal organization and administrative operations.

TRAVEL CLAIMS

(4) Voted to require staff to complete or apparently erroneous travel claim forms by a legislator. The Council's travel claim form accounting staff not to complete the claim or not to process it until it is completed by the legislator.

**NEW MEMBER
ON ENERGY
FORECASTING**

The Legislative Council appointed Representative Kenneth Nordt to the Energy Forecasting Committee to replace Representative Carl Seifert.



INTERIM COMMITTEES

- ANNEXATION The Study Committee on Annexation will hold its third meeting on Friday, January 11, 1980, in Billings. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Yellowstone Room on the second floor of the Student Union at Eastern Montana College. The committee will further analyze problems with Montana's annexation laws and will receive public comment on several discussion proposals put forward to ease those problems.
- BRANCHING OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS The Study Committee on the Branching of Financial Institutions held a public hearing on December 8. Representatives of most types of financial institutions involved in the study appeared at the hearing. The committee plans to study optional forms of branching and hear further testimony at a meeting scheduled for April 14.
- ENERGY FORECASTING On November 2 and 3, the Study Committee on Energy Forecasting held an extensive informational hearing on the question of the need for and desirability of establishing an independent state forecasting program. The committee heard testimony from representatives of investor-owned utilities, the oil and coal industries, alternative energy developers, regulatory agencies, and environmental and public interest organizations. Committee members asked their staff to prepare a report analyzing the material discussed during the meeting as well as pertinent federal and state statutes and other relevant background information. The next meeting is planned for early spring.

MEETING WITH BPA ADMINISTRATOR

- FOR ALL LEGISLATORS The Lieutenant Governor's Office has recently informed us that Sterling Munro, Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration, will meet with various state officials on Thursday, December 20, 1979. Mr. Munro would like to meet with any legislators interested in discussing issues involving the provision of electrical energy by BPA to Montana utilities and consumers. As you know, BPA is currently involved in energy forecasting for the Pacific Northwest region's 116 preference customers and four investor-owned utilities. BPA is the source of much information on energy supply and demand conditions in the region, of which western Montana is a part. In addition, Congress is in the process of substantially reorganizing the BPA, and these efforts have been and continue to be of major interest to many Montanans.

Legislators are invited to meet with Sterling Munro on the afternoon of December 20. A definite time has not been scheduled at this point, but we will notify you as soon as more details are available. Interested legislators must come to Helena to meet with Mr. Munro at their own expense -- no travel money is available for this purpose.

CONTAINERS The final meeting of the Study Committee on Containers was held in Helena on December 1. The Committee adopted a final report which will be available upon request later this month.

REVENUE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

MEETING The Revenue Oversight Committee met November 17 in Helena NOVEMBER 17 to continue its study of Montana's liquor quota system and its greenbelt law. Members reviewed staff research reports on each topic and began discussing possible legislation. A draft bill concerning the rollback tax will be considered at the Committee's January meeting.

The Committee received progress reports on the Department of Administration's recent sale of tax anticipation notes and several of the Department of Revenue's programs. The Committee also reviewed the details of several pending legal cases concerning the Department. In particular, members discussed the problems surrounding the Department of Revenue's 1978 reappraisal of commercial property, the State Tax Appeal Board's subsequent lowering of the values of some of this property by 34%, and the many suits on the matter now pending. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the following resolution:

That because of the importance of the issue of the valuation of commercial property, the number of people affected by the problem, and the complication of the problem with regard to 1979 and future years, we urge a speedy resolution of this matter so that all parties know what the tax is.

The Committee will meet again on January 12 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 104, State Capitol, Helena.

COAL TAX OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING The Subcommittee met November 16 in Helena to receive NOVEMBER 16 progress reports on two programs funded by the coal severance tax: the Renewable Resources Development Program and the Alternative Energy Program. DNRC staff

also reported on projects funded from the Resource Indemnity Trust Interest Fund.

The Subcommittee will meet in Billings in late January to discuss these programs and the local impact program.

CAPITOL
BUILDING
& PLANNING The Capitol Building and Planning Committee will hold its second meeting on January 9 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 139 of the Capitol. The meeting will be a working session for the Committee and will include a tour of the Capitol.

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING The Legislative Finance Committee met in Helena, December 7 and 8.

UNIVERSITY
FUNDING
STUDY The committee discussed a staff report which presented summaries of campus interviews and funding formulas in other states. The committee directed the staff to address funding by level, discipline, and fixed costs in developing alternatives to present funding procedures.

MSU NURSING
ISSUE The legislative delegation from Butte expressed its concern to the committee about the proposed closing of the MSU nursing program at Butte. President Tietz also addressed the issue.

PRISON
POPULATION The State Budget Director requested the committee to advise him whether the halfway house project in Billings should proceed. It was the committee's opinion that, since the prison population had not grown since the legislative session, the project should be delayed at least until the expected growth is realized.

JUNIOR
ANALYST
ARRIVES John and Carol LaFaver welcomed their new son, Jeremy John, on October 14.

LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE

MEETING The Legislative Audit Committee met December 7, 1979 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 413-415 of the State Capitol.

REPORTS TO
BE ISSUED The committee received, reviewed, and filed the following financial/compliance audit reports: Department of Business Regulation*; Department of Professional and Occupational Licensing*; Department of Community Affairs*; and Department of Administration, Treasury Division*. (*Audits conducted by Certified Public Accountant firms.)

SUNSET The committee held the public hearing on the Board of Nursing sunset audit report.

NEXT MEETING The next meeting of the Legislative Audit Committee was scheduled for January 21, 1980.

REPORTS AVAILABLE Copies of all reports are available from the Office of the Legislative Auditor, Room 135, State Capitol. Telephone: 449-3122.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

MEETING NOVEMBER 6-8 The Environmental Quality Council held its regularly scheduled meeting November 6, 7, and 8, in Malta and Glasgow. The Council and staff also toured several facilities in the area, including the Air Force Base in Glasgow; the proposed re-regulation site at Fort Peck; the Circle-West coal project; the Federal Bentonite facility in Glasgow; and the American Colloid plant in Malta. The EQC staff is now outlining the draft for the Co-ordination of Permit Procedures Act (HJR 60). Legislators are encouraged to refer to the working paper sent earlier and send any input to the EQC office as soon as possible. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held during the latter part of January.

LEGISLATIVE INTERIM CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MONTH DECEMBER						
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7 Legislative Finance Fiscal Analyst Rm. 104 8:00 a.m.	Container Dep. Rm. 139 8:00 a.m.
9	10	11	12	13	14 Corrections Rm. 139	8 Legislative Finance Legislative Cen. Rm. 139 10:00a.m.
16	17	18	19	20	21	Branching Finan- cial Institutions Senate Chambers
23	24	25 Merry Christmas	26	27	28	29
						31



LEGISLATIVE INTERIM CALENDAR

MONTH JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1			3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Capitol Building and Planning Rm. 139 1 p.m.-4 p.m.	10	11	12 Revenue Oversight Rm. 104 9:30 a.m.
13	14	15		16	17	18
20	21 Legislative Audit Comm. Rm. 104 9:00 a.m.	22	23	24	25 Environmental Quality Council TENTATIVE	26
27	28			29	30	31



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